DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 186 528 UD 020 485

AUTHOR Reynolds, Betty
TITLE Differences Between Men and Women in Their Aspirations for Careers in Educational Administration.
PUB DATE 7 Jan 80
NOTE 32p.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Academic Aspiration: Blacks: *Educational Administration: Females: Males: *Occupational Aspiration: *Racial Differences: *Self Concept: *Sex Differences: Sex Stereotypes: Whites

ABSTRACT

This study looked at three areas of women's aspirations for careers in educational administration: the relative distribution of aspiration levels: the relationships to achievement orientation; and the relationship of self-role congruence to educational administration. Significant inequalities were found in the distribution of subjects based on sex, aspiration level, race, present position, educational plans, and expected career levels. There were more black women and white men with high career aspiration levels; fewer women at the level of principal or above; more plans for the doctorate among high career aspirants regardless of sex; and more women than men with low career expectations. Women in general had higher achievement orientation scores than did men; and women with high career aspirations scored higher than men with either high or low aspiration levels. Black men showed greater congruence toward administrative roles than did white men or black or white women. (Author/RLV)

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ED186528

MAR 31 1980

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN IN THEIR ASPIRATIONS FOR CAREERS IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

Submitted by:

Betty Reynolds, Ph.D.
Group Associated Management Services
1914 Hyde Park Drive
Detroit, Michigan 48207

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January 7, 1980

UD020485

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN IN THEIR ASPIRATIONS FOR CAREERS IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

--AN ABSTRACT--

This study looked at three areas of women's aspirations for careers in educational administration: the relative distribution of aspiration levels; the relationships to achievement orientation; and, the relationships to self-role congruence towards educational administration. In each of these areas, the relationships were examined across age, marital status, race, present position, educational plans, and anticipated career level, as well as across sex and aspiration level. The sample was graduate students in educational administration classes.

Significant inequities were found in the distribution of subjects based on sex, aspiration level, race, present position, educational plans, and expected career levels. There were relatively more black women and white men with high career aspiration levels; relatively fewer women at the level of principal or above; relatively more plans for the doctorate among high career aspirants regardless of sex, and relatively fewer plans for the doctorate among low aspirant women; and relatively more women than men with low career expectations.

Women in general had higher achievement orientation scores than men; and women with high career aspirations scored higher than men with either high or low aspiration levels. Black men showed greater congruence toward administrative roles than did white men or women either black or white.

A number of recommendations were made for staff development programs, with the major thesis being that both men and women are handicapped by the present sex-role stereotyping.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN IN THEIR ASPIRATIONS FOR CAREERS IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

If you have the opportunity to walk through the hallways of almost any elementary or secondary school in America today and glance into each classroom, you soon may be asking, "What's all this fuss about Women in Education? Two-thirds of these teachers are women!" But then proceed to the principal's office--chances are better than 80% that you will be introduced to a man. If you then continue to the Board of Education offices and ask to speak to the superintendent, the odds are 99% that that person will be a man!

Some of the imbalance between women in teaching positions and administrative positions can be explained by such institutional factors as the "We-Want-a-Tough-Disciplinarian-for-Principal" syndrome. Without denying the critical importance and unfairness of such factors, this study focuses on non-institutional factors which contribute to the imbalance. My interest has centered on the more personal factors which affect the aspirations of women for a career in educational administration.

Women's Career Aspirations

I felt that there were three specific areas where

an empirical study of the career aspiration patterns of women might be worthwhile: (1) the way such factors as age, marital status, race, present position, educational plans, and anticipated career level affected the distribution of high and low career aspirations among women; (2) the way these factors affected the general achievement orientation of women; (3) the way these factors affected how the perceptions of women about themselves compared to their perceptions of administrators. My selection of these topics was influenced by several previous studies.

Goerss (1977) reviewed a number of studies which consistently showed that men were more likely to aspire to a principalship than were women. In each study, at least 40% of the men (and often more) desired the position, while in no study did more than 20% of the women desire it.

Other studies have confirmed and amplified these patterns. Gross and Trask (1976) compared men and women principals and found that women had a lower desire for professional advancement. These investigators believed that age, and factors related indirectly to age (including number of children and marital status), influenced the aspiration levels of women. The same factors, however, had no effect on men. Dias (1975) found that men were more likely to have plans for a higher degree, including the doctorate.

Studies of the influence of race on career aspiration have been somewhat contradictory, as reported in Turner

and McCaffrey, 1977; Weston and Mednick, 1975; Wallace, 1979. Some studies have found that black women had higher levels of aspiration than white women, particularly among college educated subjects. Upper middle class black women, though, were quite similar to white women. And contrary to the stereotype of the unambitious black man, at least one study (Gurin & Epps, 1975) found that black male students had higher career level aspiration than women in general.

Donelson and Gullahorn (1977) and Barnett and Baruch (1978) have suggested that the realistic expectation that one can attain an administrative position increases one's aspiration for such a position. Donelson and Gullahorn have confirmed an earlier study by Stein and Bailey (1973) that women have a lower expectation of success than men.

Oliver (1974) broadened the parochial concept of achievement orientation as a masculine characteristic. She maintained that the aspirations of women for careers outside the home, rather than being a manifestation of achievement orientation alone, were better explained as a combination of achievement and affiliation needs. The need for affiliation was characterized by a desire for social approval. Oliver further showed that there was, indeed, a statistical interaction between achievement and affiliation scores; and this interaction predicted more accurately than achievement scores alone the aspirations of women for careers outside the home. She also speculated that nurturance needs--needs

characterized by the desire to rear and care for others--might prove to be a more effective predictor in the interaction than affiliation.

Dias (1975) studied self-concept as a factor influencing aspiration for a career in educational administration. She found that self-role congruence--the degree to which individuals' perceptions of themselves and administrators were similar--was a significant predictor of administrative career aspirations. Other significant predictors were sex, present educational attainment, future educational plans, "role preference" (as determined by self-role congruence), general achievement orientation, and career expectations. Surprisingly, perhaps, men and women did not differ significantly in their general desire to achieve; although women had lower expectations for an administrative career, lower self-role congruence, and less ambitious future educational plans.

Studies by Britton (1973) and Schmuck (1978) suggested that men might be avoiding such positions as teaching kindergarten because sex role stereotyping would lead to a lack of self-role congruence for such positions. And many successful male elementary classroom teachers, yielding to the pressure of social norms, have moved into administrative positions where they have felt less comfortable and less successful than in the classroom.

Method

After reviewing the studies summarized above, plus others not specifically cited, the following three research questions were formulated: (1) Considering their aspirations for careers in educational administration, how does the distribution of men and women differ across age, marital status, race, present position, educational plans, and anticipated career level? (2) Considering their aspirations for careers in educational administration, how do the scores of men and women differ on a measure of achievement orientation across age, marital status, race, present position, educational plans, and anticipated career level? (3) Considering their aspirations for careers in educational administration, how do the scores of men and women differ on a measure of self-role congruence across age, marital status, race, present position, educational plans, and anticipated career levels? It was hypothesized that there would be significant interactions between sex, career aspiration level, and each of the other individual independent variables, i.e., age, marital status, race, present position, educational plans, and anticipated career levels.

Most of the independent variables for this study were defined in terms of dichotomous categories; the one exception was age. The categories were: (1) for sex, male or female; (2) for career aspiration level, aspiring for less than a principalship or aspiring for a principalship

and above; (3) for age, 35 and below, 36 through 45, or 46 and over; (4) for marital status, either married or anticipating marriage, or not married and not anticipating marriage; (5) for race, black or white; (6) for present position, below principal or principal and above; (7) for educational plans, doctorate or below doctorate; and (8) for expected career level, below principal or principal and above. The data were gathered from surveys filled out by the subjects themselves.

The categories for present position and expected career level were not all-inclusive, and it was necessary to exclude from this study those subjects whose present position aspiration level or expected career level was either in higher education or entirely outside education.

The two key dependent variables of this study were "achievement orientation" and "self-role congruence." Achievement orientation and self-role congruence were measured by two sub-scales of the ACL: the Achievement sub-scale and the Nurturance sub-scale (Gough & Heilburn, 1965). The subjects were first asked to describe themselves (through "yes" or "no" responses) in terms of 56 adjectives (all the positive items from the Achievement and Nurturance sub-scales of the ACL); they were then asked to describe "real-life" administrators in the same manner, using the same 56 adjectives. This instrumentation procedure was consistent with the recommendations of Wright and Douglas (1975), and

Wright and Stone (1979).

Operationally, achievement orientation was defined as the standardized score (Z score) for self on the ACL Achievement sub-scale, adjusted through covariance procedures for the standardized score for self on the ACL Nurturance sub-scale. Thus the statistical procedure (covariance) tested Oliver's (1974, 1975) hypothesis that achievement orientation could be measured better through an interaction of the Achievement and Nurturance sub-scales than through the Achievement sub-scale by itself. Through use of standard scores, it was possible to legitimately "mix" and compare scores measured on different sub-scales.

Self-role congruence was measured by first standardizing the scores for administrators on the two ACL sub-scales. Next, the absolute differences between the corresponding self-scores and administrator scores were determined. Finally, the achievement differences for the nurturance differences through covariance procedures were adjusted; this provided a measure of self-role congruence.

The data-gathering instrument was named the Educators' Career Survey. The recommendations of Berdie and Anderson (1974), McCallon and McCray (1975), and Dillman (1978), in particular, were used to develop the instrument. The development which took a year and a half, included review of the instrument by experts, review by "potential users" of the results, and pilot testing on limited samples.

Subjects in the pilot testings were interviewed both individually and in groups and were invited to write comments about the instrument. The instrument went through three cycles of revision before it was considered ready for final use.

With the cooperation of the University Council for Educational Administration, a number of graduate schools of education (chosen for their interest in "women's research") were asked to participate in the survey. Participation involved local administration of the instrument by university instructors to graduate classes in educational administration. Ten universities agreed to participate.

Research Question 1, concerning the distribution of men and women in their career aspirations across a series of six other variables, was tested using three-way Chi-Square tests (see Everitt, 1977, for the method). Research Question 2, concerning achievement orientation, and Research Question 3, concerning self-role congruence, were both tested with a three-way analysis of covariance tests. The usual conventions concerning underlying test assumptions were observed; and the Newman-Keuls a posteriori contrast test (Winer, 1971) was used where indicated.

In addition, a multiple regression, using the ACL standardized self-achievement scores as the dependent variable was performed. Its basic purpose was exploratory rather than hypothesis confirming. It was hoped that this

regression analysis would help clarify the relationships between the variables.

Findings

A total of 613 Educators' Career Survey questionnaires (ECS) were returned. After excluding 155 subjects who aspired to a career in higher education and 77 who aspired to a non-educational career, 381 were available for analysis. (Detailed statistical tables may be found in the formal report for this study [Reynolds, 1979].) Table 1 shows the breakdown of all 613 questionnaires by sex and career aspiration level.

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Insert Table 1 about here
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Table 2 shows the means and standard deviations for the various Adjective Check List (ACL) sub-scale scores, including the derived self-congruence scores. A comparison of the means, standard deviations, minimum possible scores (zero for all raw scores), and maximum possible scores shows that each mean is within two standard deviations of either the minimum or maximum possible score; in no case, though, is the distance less than one standard deviation. This is a limitation of the measurement instrument, at least for this sample. Its effect is to underestimate the self-achievement and self-nurturance scores for subjects with a high achievement orientation; and to overestimate the

Table 1

Frequency Distribution of Sample by Sex and Career Aspiration Level

Sex	Career Aspiration Level				Totals
	Below Principal	Principal or Above	Higher Education	Outside Education (or missing Responses)	
Female	26	171	85	49	331
Male	17	167	68	28	280
Missing Responses	0	0	2	0	2
Total	43	338	155	77	613

achievement congruence and nurturance congruence scores for subjects with a high level of self-role congruence (where low scores correspond to a high level of congruence). This reduces the likelihood both of discovering true differences involving these groups and of "accepting" false differences, so the bias is conservative.

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Insert Table 2 about here
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In analyzing the data for Research Question 1, tables were created which used the actual distribution of subjects by sex, career aspiration level, and one of the other six independent variables. Where it was necessary to combine or eliminate categories because of the conventions of the Chi-Square tests (at least 80% of the cells in the table had to have an expected frequency of five or more), a resulting "collapsed" distribution was shown. Finally, the "expected distribution"--based on conventional probability calculations using the marginal totals--was demonstrated.

An analysis of the data regarding Research Question 1 has shown that more black women and white men have high career aspiration levels than do white women and black men; and that there are more males and fewer females at the position of principal or above. The data have further shown that there are higher numbers of both men and women with high career aspiration levels who plan to attain the doctorate;

Table 2

Means, Standard Deviations, and Maximum and Minimum Possible Scores for Educators' Career Survey Personal Traits Scores

Scales	Raw Scores		Maximum Possible Scores		Minimum Possible Standard Scores
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Raw	Standardized	
Self-Achievement	15.63	5.84	25	1.60	-2.68
Self-Nurturance	21.18	8.41	32	1.29	-2.52
Administrative Achievement	12.61	6.93	25	1.79	-1.82
Administrative Nurturance	10.10	8.93	32	2.61	-1.20
Achievement Congruence	.93	.73	4.47	--	--
Nurturance Congruence	.94	.62	5.13	--	--

and that there are more women than men with low career expectations.

The covariance analysis for Research Question 2, which concerns achievement orientation, is summarized in Table 3. Contrary to my hypotheses, there are virtually no significant interaction effects; the only one is an interaction of sex and career aspiration level under the analysis for age. Also contrary to my hypotheses, simple main effects are additive rather than interactive under each analysis for sex and for career aspiration level. Women in general have higher achievement scores than men; and high aspiration level subjects have higher scores than low aspiration subjects.

The hypothesized improved measurement obtained through covariance adjustment of the achievement scores with the nurturance scores has been confirmed, however; there is an improvement of about 30% in the variance-accounted-for over the ANOVA tests (see the bottom lines of Table 3).

Although the covariance results for race are reported in Table 3, they are suspect because of covariate-factor interaction; a basic requirement of covariance analysis is that there be no such interaction. An ANOVA test has shown that there is a significant difference in the nurturance scores with blacks scoring higher than whites.

A Newman-Keuls Analysis of Contrasts for the sex by aspiration level interaction shows that females with high

career aspiration levels have significantly higher achievement scores than females with low aspiration levels or males with either high or low aspiration levels.

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Insert Table 3 about here
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Table 4 summarizes the covariance analysis for Research Question 3, which concerns self-role congruence toward administration. Three interaction effects are significant: the interaction of sex and aspiration level under expected career level; the interaction of sex and age; and the interaction of sex and race. No simple main effects are significant. The covariate effect, as hypothesized, is significant, although the improvement in variance-accounted-for is only in the 5% range.

A series of Newman-Keuls Contrast Tests are inconclusive for the sex by age interaction, and for the sex by aspiration level interaction under expected career level. A highly unbalanced factorial design probably explains the failure of these contrast tests to pinpoint a source for the significance; the number of low aspiration level subjects and of subjects over 45 in the sample is relatively low. However, in a Newman-Keuls Contrast Test of the sex by race interaction, male blacks show greater self-role congruence toward administration than do white males or females of either race.

Table 3

Summary of Attained Significance Levels for Analysis of Variance and Covariance on ECS Self-Achievement Standardized Scores

Source of Variation	Analysis of Variance F Ratios						Analysis of Covariance F Ratios					
	Age (7)	Race (8)	Marital Status (9)	Present Position (10)	Educational Plans (11)	Expected Career Level (12)	Age (7)	Race (8)	Marital Status (9)	Present Position (10)	Educational Plans (11)	Expected Career Level (12)
Total Explained Effect	1.97*	3.65*	1.97	2.93*	3.94*	2.03*	17.04*	24.50*	26.44*	30.38*	25.94*	22.89*
Main Effects	3.92*	7.63*	3.25	4.46*	7.81*	4.19*	5.38*	7.33*	4.59*	6.07*	11.33*	6.09*
Sex	9.91*	11.12*	8.07*	12.06*	9.64*	10.34*	11.60*	11.61*	8.00*	12.50*	11.58*	11.02*
Aspiration	2.15*	2.32	1.24	1.23	2.26	1.63*	7.06*	7.08*	4.46*	5.17*	7.55*	7.18*
Independent Variable	1.81	9.46*	.44	.08	11.52*	.59	1.43	3.29	1.30	.55	14.86*	.07
2-Way Interactions	1.02	.84	.69	.64	1.31	.32	2.16	1.78	1.21	1.23	1.51	.62
Sex & Aspiration	1.89	1.94	.78	1.29	1.67	.52	3.99*	3.49	1.40	2.44	3.02	.19
Sex & Independent Variable	1.19	.08	.47	.02	2.21	.00	2.89	.42	.32	.02	1.92	.03
Aspiration & Independent Variable	.48	.63	.20	see note	.49	.02	.85	1.52	.72	see note	.15	.17
3-Way Interactions	.46	.12	see note	see note	.21	.68	.00	.30	see note	see note	.08	.51
Covariate	--	--	--	--	--	--	172.16*	168.36*	167.68*	161.62*	168.88*	162.51*
R^2 x 100 (% of Variance)	4.0	5.9	2.7	4.1	6.0	3.4	33.8	34.1	34.2	36.3	35.6	34.0

*p < .05

Note: Calculation not performed by computer program because of empty cells in the design.

Insert Table 4 about here

In addition to these hypothesis confirming tests, a multiple regression was employed, using the ACL standardized self-achievement scores as the dependent variable. The results are shown in Table 5, and are consistent with the other analyses. The one surprise is that educational plans in effect "pushed" career aspiration level out of the regression equation completely, even though career aspiration level had been a major independent variable in this, as well as in a number of previous studies. Statistically, the implication is that self reports of educational plans are a more effective measure of whatever is being measured than are self reports of career aspiration level.

Insert Table 5 about here

Discussion and Conclusions

There were, of course, certain disadvantages to the use of graduate students in educational administration classes as the sample. Some evidence from the literature suggested that women in general did not enroll in an educational administration curriculum. On the other hand, more current research has indicated that there is a changing trend (Schmuck, 1975). Contemporary women are apparently

Table 4

Summary of Attained Significance Levels for Analysis of Variance and Covariance on ECS Congruence Scores

Source of Variation	Analysis of Variance F Ratios						Analysis of Covariance F Ratios					
	Age (13)	Race (14)	Marital Status (15)	Present Position (16)	Educational Plans (17)	Expected Career Level (18)	Age (13)	Race (14)	Marital Status (15)	Present Position (16)	Educational Plans (17)	Expected Career Level (18)
Total Explained Effect	1.57	1.48	.91	2.82*	1.09	1.57	3.39*	4.61*	4.14	4.87*	4.25*	4.08
Main Effects	.85	1.56	1.20	2.56*	.97	1.04	.97	1.50	.97	2.28	.93	.99
Sex	3.04	2.80	3.37	5.73*	2.73	2.66	2.90	2.65	2.80	5.20*	2.68	2.29
Aspiration	.11	.09	.01	1.71	.11	.21	.08	.07	.03	1.44	.09	.16
Independent Variable	.13	1.80	.20	.25	.08	.27	.44	1.77	.07	.19	.00	.51
2-Way Interactions	2.37*	1.88	.62	3.20*	.72	1.25	1.98	2.50	.57	2.77	.70	1.43
Sex & Aspiration	1.89*	1.29	1.25	3.41	1.57	3.20	1.97	1.41	1.30	2.94	1.93	3.97*
Sex & Independent Variable	4.83	3.76*	.01	2.04	.24	1.81	3.90*	5.57*	.05	1.79	.04	2.40
Aspiration & Independent Variable	.25	.41	1.01	see note	.24	1.12	.18	.24	.49	see note	.04	.78
3-Way Interactions	1.02	.03	see note	see note	2.53	4.08*	.87	.06	see note	see note	2.97	2.34
Covariate	--	--	--	--	--	--	25.19*	24.84*	24.40*	16.84*	26.16*	23.07*
R^2 x 100 (% of Variance)	.09	1.3	1.0	2.3	0.8	0.9	7.1	7.4	7.3	6.9	7.3	6.8

*p < .05

Note: Calculation not performed by computer program because of empty cells in the design.

[a]There was a covariate-factor interaction, significant > .05, for race.

Table 5

Multiple Regression of Independent Variables and Self-Nurturance on ECS Self-Achievement Scores[a]

	Cumulative R^2 (% of Variance)	R^2 for Individual Variable	Regression Coefficient
Self-Nurturance Scores	.30	.30	.53
Educational Plans	.32	.01	.28
Sex	.33	.01	-.19
Marital Status	.33	.00	-.20
Expected Career Level	.33	.00	-.07
Age	.34	.00	-.05
Race	.34	.00	-.08
Constant	--	--	.45

[a]Variables not in equation because of insufficient F level or tolerance level: career aspiration level and present position.

now more likely to select administration as a course of study than they once did.

Educators with "non-administrative" aspirations may have been under-represented in the sample. Still, educators with non-administrative aspirations did enroll in graduate administration courses, partly to meet certification requirements and partly to satisfy personal needs. These "non-aspirant" educators in the sample, I feel, were reasonably representative of their colleagues who were not enrolled in educational administration courses. Moreover, any bias in this group was probably toward, rather than away from, their administratively-oriented, high-career-aspiration-level colleagues; this lessened the chances of accepting a false hypothesis about difference between the groups.

The fact that the effects of our independent variables are additive, rather than interactive, is important to the designers of staff development programs as well as to the statisticians and measurement specialists. If there are six additive variables and each variable is dichotonous, a program designer needs to create only two times six, or twelve programs, in order to provide options for all possible combinations of variables. If, however, the effects are interactive, the program designer must prepare two to the sixth power, i.e., sixty-four programs, to provide for all possible combinations of variables.

Future researchers should consider incorporating two

of the findings into their designs. First, self reports of educational plans are better predictors than self reports of career aspiration, probably because they are less obtrusive. Second, achievement orientation should be measured as an interaction of the Adjective Check List (ACL) achievement and nurturance sub-scales using covariance, regression, or MANOVA procedures. It also might be useful to use the affiliation sub-scale, either as an additional interactive variable or as a substitute for the nurturance sub-scale.

Data provided by the study indicate that competent, willing women are being denied careers in educational administration. It further shows that black men, although they display a high level of self-role congruence for administration, do not aspire to administrative careers to the same extent as white men.

It is possible that a lower desire for administrative positions among women is the result of their lower expectation levels. Why play the game if the rules say you can't win? White women should be encouraged to aspire to administrative careers. And women in general with low career aspirations should be encouraged to seek higher degrees, including the doctorate, to the same extent that men with low career aspirations seek such degrees.

White males should not be pressured into striving for administrative careers. Where their natural bent is toward administration, of course, they should be supported.

But where their inclination is toward classroom teaching--even at the kindergarten or nursery school level--they should not be discouraged by stereotyped labeling or positions.

Even though black men who display a high level of self-role congruence for administration do not aspire to administrative careers to the same extent as white men, they should be encouraged to aspire to such careers. The high level of self-role congruence among black men may indicate that they are beginning to accept themselves in the role of "decision makers." They should be encouraged to expand this role.

I believe that while there must be policy and program changes within the educational system, the outlook for women will not improve to a great extent until women, themselves, feel the need to expand the dimensions of their lives. Women must take the responsibility for their successes and their failures, and must join in support of each other as they attempt to obtain equity with their male counterparts. The goal of the educational system must be to facilitate a division of labor that reflects the interests, capabilities, and potential of both women and men.

Black women would benefit from programs which reduce the racial barriers to their careers. Here is a group which has the aspiration and the motivation for such careers. Society, for the sake of its own enlightened self-interest,

must remove the double barriers of sexism and racism which these women face.

I believe that staff development programs should focus on the inequities discussed here. Women must be given more opportunities to become administrators, perhaps partly through expanded internship programs. Possibly as one result, women will acquire a higher self-role congruence for administration as they are provided with real-life role models.

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